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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 002714

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NP/CBM AND EUR/WE; DEPARTMENT ALSO PASS TO
THE MISSILE TECHNOLOGY CONTROL REGIME COLLECTIVE

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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [MNUC](#) [ETTC](#) [TSPA](#) [KSCA](#) [SP](#) [MTCRE](#)

SUBJECT: MTCR/SPAIN: MORE SPANISH REACTION TO U.S. PROPOSAL
ON NORTH KOREA

REF: A. 7/18/05 DURHAM-FORDER CLASSIFIED EMAIL

[1](#)B. MADRID 2713

[1](#)C. SECSTATE 127451

Classified By: ESTHOFF KEN FORDER PER 1.4 (B/D)

[1](#)1. (C) In a July 20 meeting with MFA International Disarmament Affairs Ambassador Tomas Rodriguez Pantoja and MFA MTCR POC Ambassador Manuel Viturro de la Torre, ESTHOFF provided Ref A U.S. reaction to Ref B Spanish thoughts on Ref C U.S. MTCR North Korea proposal. Rodriguez Pantoja and de la Torre said they had discussed our North Korea proposal with the French who, per Ref C, had received our proposal from the U.S. Embassy in Paris. They also indicated that the French had shared the U.S. proposal with the UK and perhaps others and that the U.S. proposal would be discussed at a July 26 meeting of EU MTCR members.

[1](#)2. (C) The Ambassadors said that they and several European counterparts had doubts about the wisdom of trying to "formalize" greater scrutiny of North Korean activities via the adoption of a formal MTCR consensus decision recorded in the plenary's Chairman's Summary. They said that such a move would be opposed by at least Russia, India, Brazil and South Africa. They also stressed that many key European MTCR partners, including Spain, France, the UK and Germany were already doing what the U.S. proposal suggests (i.e., paying closer attention to the activities of North Korean-flagged vessels and ships bound from or going to North Korea). Trying to formalize greater scrutiny of North Korea via the MTCR could actually hurt rather than help, by giving ammunition to opponents who would argue, "why only North Korea and not Israel," or "why not via other multilateral nonproliferation fora?"

[1](#)3. (C) Given these concerns, the EU MTCR partners would probably prefer to address the U.S. proposal in a more informal Madrid plenary forum, such as the Heads of Delegation dinner. The more limited participation would reduce the chances that Heads of Delegation would feel compelled to "grandstand" and take harder line positions to impress their inter-ministerial delegation members. While they agreed on the need to pay greater attention to North Korean activities, the Ambassadors thought this could be better achieved via informal vice more formalized MTCR cooperation.

[1](#)4. (C) The Ambassadors suggested that an EU/MTCR consensus position on how to address North Korea at the September Madrid MTCR plenary could emerge from the July 26 meeting. It was clear that Madrid would almost certainly join this consensus position.

[1](#)5. (C) COMMENT: De la Torre's position has evolved since the last time we spoke with him (July 18 - Ref B). In the two-day interim, he: (1) hosted a Spanish inter-ministerial working group meeting that discussed, inter alia, our North Korea proposal; and (2) had in depth conversations with his French MTCR counterpart. One or the other (or both) appears to have increased his skepticism about the U.S. proposal to use the MTCR to heighten the attention given to North Korean proliferation concerns.

AGUIRRE